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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed documentation from 50 state departments of education concerning high school graduation requirements for students in general and for students with disabilities. Preliminary information reviews research on graduation requirements, research on minimum competence tests, and legal issues and implications. Study findings are then presented, including: (1) 44 states use Carnegie course unit requirements ranging from 10.25 to 24.00 credits; (2) 17 states have requirements for either a minimum competency test or exit exam; (3) local education agencies in several states have the option of establishing more stringent requirements than called for in state guidelines; and (4) exit documents that are awarded to students with disabilities vary from state to state (e.g., standard diplomas, modified diplomas, certificates of attendance), with similar requirements sometimes earning different types of exit documents in different states. Tables and figures provide state-by-state data on: Carnegie course units required for graduation; graduation requirements in curricular areas; states requiring exit exams or minimum competency tests; exit document options for students with disabilities; and standard diploma, modified diploma, and certificate requirements for students with disabilities. An appendix presents all graduation requirements for each state. (Contains 22 references.) (DB)

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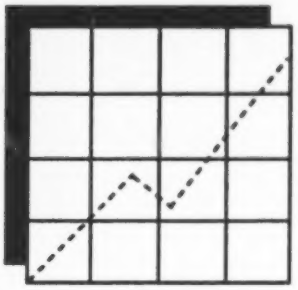

High School Graduation Requirements: What's Happening for Students with Disabilities?

National Center on Educational Outcomes

The College of Education
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

in collaboration with

St. Cloud State University
and
National Association of State Directors of Special Education

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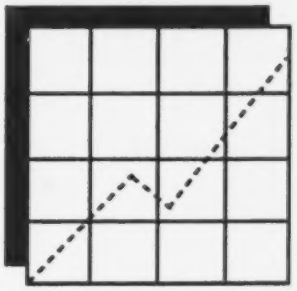

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National Center on Educational Outcomes

The College of Education
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO), established in 1990, works with state departments of education, national policy-making groups, and others to facilitate and enrich the development and use of indicators of educational outcomes for students with disabilities. It is believed that responsible use of such indicators will enable students with disabilities to achieve better results from their educational experiences. The Center represents a collaborative effort of the University of Minnesota, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, and St. Cloud State University.

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Abstract

Although increasing the high school graduation rate is now a national education goal, requirements for graduation are not set at the national level. And, while the goal is said to apply to all students, including those in special education programs, what high school graduation means for these students is not clear. We collected documentation from state departments of education to examine high school graduation requirements for students in general, and for students with disabilities. Forty-four states use Carnegie course unit requirements ranging from 10.25 to 24.00 credits. Seventeen states currently have requirements for either a minimum competency test or exit exam. Local education agencies in several states have the option of establishing more stringent requirements than called for in state guidelines. Exit documents that are awarded to students with disabilities also vary from state to state (e.g., standard diplomas, modified diplomas, certificates of attendance), with similar requirements sometimes earning different types of exit documents in different states. These inconsistencies in graduation requirements and their implications for the future are discussed.

High School Graduation Requirements: What's Happening for Students with Disabilities?

Graduation from high school is an integral and cherished part of the U.S. educational system. Having sufficient numbers of students graduate is viewed as important to our nation's competitiveness in a global society. High school graduation is viewed as so important that increasing the graduation rate is one of our nation's educational goals. Goal 2, first endorsed by the governors and the President of the U.S. in 1989, and now codified in law through *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Public Law 103-227), states that "by the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent" (P.L. 103-227). This goal is supported by two objectives that call for (a) a significant reduction in school dropout rates, along with the successful return and graduation of 75% of those who have already dropped out, and (b) a reduction in the gap between the high school graduation rates of students with minority and non-minority backgrounds.

While this is a national goal, supported by a national law, there is no mention in the law or the goal of what the requirement is for a student to graduate. Requirements for high school graduation are not set by the U.S. Department of Education. Rather, they are set either through state regulations or by local districts in concert with general state guidelines.

Now, at the same time that our nation has set a 90 percent high school completion rate as the goal to be reached by the year 2000, many states (or local districts) have been increasing high school graduation requirements as part of an overall education reform movement (Medrich, Brown, Henke, Ross & McArthur, 1992). The requirements that states set for graduation can range from Carnegie unit requirements (a certain number of class credits earned in specific areas), to successfully passing minimum competency tests, high school exit exams, and/or a series of benchmark exams. States may also require almost any combination of these. The diversity in possible requirements for graduating from school is complicated by a similarly diverse set of possible types of graduation documents. The high school diploma is not the only document that represents successful completion of high school. Among the array of possibilities are diplomas with endorsements, certificates of attendance, and standard diplomas, to mention a few.

Understanding the range of requirements for students with disabilities to successfully "complete school" is thus a complicated but important task. Goals 2000 is very clear in its language that its goals, objectives, and supports for reform are for all students, and that "all students" includes students with disabilities. When Goal 2 states that the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent, it is to be assumed that calculation of the percentage is based on all students, including those served in special education programs. The need to understand the requirements for students with disabilities to graduate, and to examine the possible implications for policy, is particularly important because of the finding that students with disabilities experience significant negative outcomes when they do not earn a high school or equivalent diploma (Affleck, Edgar, Levine, & Kortering, 1990; Bruininks, Thurlow, Lewis, & Larson, 1988; Edgar, 1987; Hasazi, Gordon, & Roe, 1985; Wagner, 1992). And, we have data to suggest that more stringent graduation requirements may be related to greater rates of dropping out of school among students with disabilities compared to their counterparts without disabilities (Wagner, 1991).

Previous Research on Graduation Requirements

A decade ago, the possible effects of changing high school graduation requirements were noted by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (1985). It concluded that

increasing graduation requirements could eliminate a curricular balance involving a "universe of learning," and leave students with diverse interests and needs few opportunities for courses in various content areas outside of the basic curriculum emphasized in the graduation rules. In addition, ASCD posed the possibility that increased requirements might have the unintended effect of causing "at-risk" students to abandon their quest for diplomas. ASCD did not move beyond the at-risk students to consider students with disabilities.

Most literature on graduation requirements is written from the perspective of general education, and does not consider students with disabilities. Even the U.S. Department of Education's (1992) document Heading Toward Commencement simply noted that students with disabilities are one of the minority groups mentioned in the second objective of Goal 2 because of the significantly discrepant graduation rate of these students. But the Department document did not provide suggestions on how to address the issue other than to say that "communities will therefore want to examine graduation rates for these students as well as the rate for the community as a whole" (p. 13). In the Goal 2 Technical Report (1993), the Office of Educational Research and Improvement did indicate a need for research to identify the factors that lead these students to drop out at a much higher rate than their general education counterparts, and suggested that OERI should incorporate the results of OSERS research and development programs on this issue into its efforts to address the high school completion rate.

One study was conducted on graduation policies and practices for students with disabilities in the mid- to late 1980s. At that time, Bodner, Clark, and Mellard (1987) found that:

- Forty-seven states had legislation or state board of education requirements of minimum credits for graduation.
- Thirty-six of those states had increased their requirements since the passage of Public Law 94-142 (Education of the Handicapped Act of 1975).
- Thirty states had minimum competency programs, and of these, fifteen determined a student's exit document by scores on a minimum competency test.

Bodner et al. (1987) classified policies for granting diplomas for students with disabilities into three categories: (1) standard diploma and same standards as regular education, (2) standard diploma and different standards, and (3) modified diploma and different standards. Bodner et al. also cited the approaches to implementing these options that were identified by Higgins (1979) and Ross and Weintraub (1980):

> awarding the same diploma to all students who meet regular standards, a special diploma to special education students who have individualized standards specified in their IEPs or who pursue standards based on a different curriculum, and a certificate to special education students who meet some, but not all, of the regular graduation requirements. (p. 10)

In their conclusions about the impact of educational reform and graduation requirements, Bodner et al. (1987) argued that the push for more academic coursework could lead to a narrowing of the curriculum. This could be taken to the point where the curriculum is inappropriate for many students in special education, particularly those requiring education in functional living skills.

In a recent document on graduation tests, Mehrens (1993) discussed the issues surrounding the implementation of high school graduation tests, which are viewed as a prime example of high stakes assessments (those with significant consequences for someone). He recommended that states considering the use of such tests move slowly. He urged them to address the following issues before implementation: curriculum/content specification; psychometric properties of the test; and the educational, legal, human, and financial resources needed. He also recommended that

specific test-taking procedures be adopted for special education students, including exemption, administrative adaptations, and adapted versions of the test.

Research on Minimum Competency Tests

At about the same time that A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) was first released, Wildemuth (1983) was reviewing approaches that have been used to accommodate students with disabilities in minimum competency test (MCT) graduation programs. Among the various approaches that she summarized were exclusion from testing programs, use of different standards, and use of different tests.

Vitello (1988) looked at three policy options for students with disabilities. First, students with disabilities may be required to pass the standard MCT to receive a diploma. The second option for students with disabilities is to be exempted from the MCT, with graduation diplomas granted for successful completion of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Third, different competency standards may be developed for students with disabilities.

Catterall (1989) found a discrepancy between the beliefs of school administrators and students about such tests. While administrators expressed the opinion that the tests are not a serious impediment or threat to graduation, students who initially failed one of these tests were more likely to express doubts about their graduation prospects than students who had not failed.

After examining the effects of minimum competency testing on students with disabilities and other groups for the National Center for Education Statistics, Medrich et al. (1992) reported that states have implemented MCT testing programs in several ways, specifically:

- state-developed test, with state-defined minimum score to receive a diploma
- state-developed test, with the local education agency setting passing standards
- state-developed test used only to award special advanced or honors diplomas
- state-defined competencies required for graduation, with the local education agency determining the method of assessment

In their report, Medrich et al. also noted the diversified nature of most MCTs, which can range from simple reading tests to tests that assess competency in several skill areas. Because of the variety of MCTs and the lack of research, Medrich et al. did not present any recommendations. Instead, they concluded that it was very difficult to make generalizations about the possible effects on student performance of such graduation testing.

Legal Issues and Implications

Because graduation requirements are high stakes for students, it is to be expected that the requirements would be tested in the courts. Phillips (1993) discussed the federal statutes that afford protection for individuals with disabilities: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Federal courts have held that IDEA, though it mandates individualized education programs for students with disabilities, does not guarantee a particular educational outcome. Section 504 requires that reasonable accommodations be made for the known physical or cognitive limitations of otherwise qualified individuals for any public programs receiving federal funds. These

accommodations must be judged on an individual basis. ADA extended these requirements to private entities.

In 1988, Vitello identified some of the possible legal issues related to the three options that he identified for the use of MCTs for students with disabilities. Among them were:

- Does denial of a diploma to a student who fails an MCT constitute a violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 or IDEA, or the Due Process and Equal Protection clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment?

- Should students with disabilities be exempt from MCTs and be awarded a regular diploma based on completion of IEPs? If so, does this constitute a violation of equal protection for students without disabilities who fail MCTs and cannot receive a standard diploma?

Vitello expressed the opinion that standardized MCTs that require all students to achieve a minimum level of academic uniformity are contrary to the intent of individualized instruction for students with disabilities under P.L. 94-142, and that appropriate education could be compromised if the IEP is designed to help the student pass the MCT for the purpose of obtaining a diploma.

In a review of legal issues surrounding testing of persons with disabilities, Pullin and Zirkel (1988) discussed "test-for-diploma" programs and the participation of students with disabilities. Courts have held that:

> the use of minimum competency tests to determine the award of regular high school diplomas to students with handicaps is neither *per se* unconstitutional nor a *per se* violation of the federal statutes concerning education of the handicapped. (p. 13)

In addition, when a testing requirement is implemented, there must be sufficient accommodations in test administration, and adequate advance notice to plan for instruction in the skills and knowledge tested through a student's IEP, or to make an informed decision to not gear the IEP to the test.

Kortering, Julnes, and Edgar (1990) reviewed case law related to the graduation of students receiving special education services. Based on the cases reviewed, the following guidelines were provided to school districts:

- Local districts have the discretion to restrict the award of standard diplomas. However, in awarding nonstandard diplomas to special education students, the practice must be consistent with the state's interest.

- Procedures that result in differentiating special education students should be founded on fair standards that have been explained to the student and parents, and students must be given an opportunity to satisfy the standards as is or through the provision of reasonable accommodation.

- Goals and standards on an IEP are a means of evaluating whether a student can graduate, and can be used in place of district requirements.

Phillips (1993) provided a discussion of the *Debra P. v. Turlington* case, considered the landmark case regarding tests to award diplomas. The trial court established that a high school diploma is a property interest, which makes it subject to protection under the Fourteenth Amendment. The decision in this case imposed the requirements of curricular validity and

adequate notice on high school exit exams. This case addressed general education students; it did not specifically address the rights of students with disabilities. Phillips posed three questions regarding the extension of the *Debra P.* case to students with disabilities:

> (1) Can diplomas be withheld from disabled students who satisfactorily complete their IEPs but are unable to pass the test?
> (2) If diplomas can be denied to disabled students, are the procedural and substantive due process requirements different in any way from the constitutional requirements for nondisabled students? and
> (3) What are the criteria for determining the testing accommodations that must be provided to disabled students, if any? (p. 70)

On the topic of differentiated diplomas, wherein endorsements are granted to students passing the tests at different (i.e., higher) standards, Phillips (1993) stated that such endorsements may be viewed as a relevant property right if employers make employment conditional on endorsements rather than diplomas. However, she further stated that standardized diplomas with endorsements for exceptional performance may be more politically viable than differentiated diplomas or withholding diplomas for substandard performance since:

> students who fail the endorsement tests or do not take the tests because they are in special education programs still can receive unendorsed high school diplomas if they satisfy all course or IEP (Individualized Educational Program for students with disabilities) requirements. (p. 29)

While Bodner et al. (1987) provided an excellent overview of the status of graduation policies and practices, their document did not contain any state-by-state descriptions of these practices. All data were aggregated in their study. We conducted our study to update the information provided by Bodner et al. and to produce information on what specific states are doing. We asked the following questions:

1. How are state graduation requirements applied to students with special needs?

2. Do students with special needs receive a standard diploma upon completion of their studies, or some type of modified exit document (e.g., special diploma or certificate of completion)?

3. If the state requires a competency exam or exit exam, do students with disabilities participate? If so, what types of modifications and/or accommodations are made for them?

Method

In order to obtain information on individual states' practices, we collected documentation from state departments of education about their graduation requirements. This documentation may take the form of state statute or regulations from the department of education. We received information from all 50 states. In only 22 states were students with disabilities addressed in the documentation that we received. When students with disabilities were not addressed, we contacted the state again, this time redirecting our inquiries to the department of special education; this was done through telephone calls.

We also were interested in determining whether a high school graduation test was a prerequisite for obtaining a diploma. The original documentation that we received often did not

address this issue. If the information was not included, we called back to obtain it. This call was generally redirected to the assessment unit. All information was collected between April 1994 and October 1994.

Results

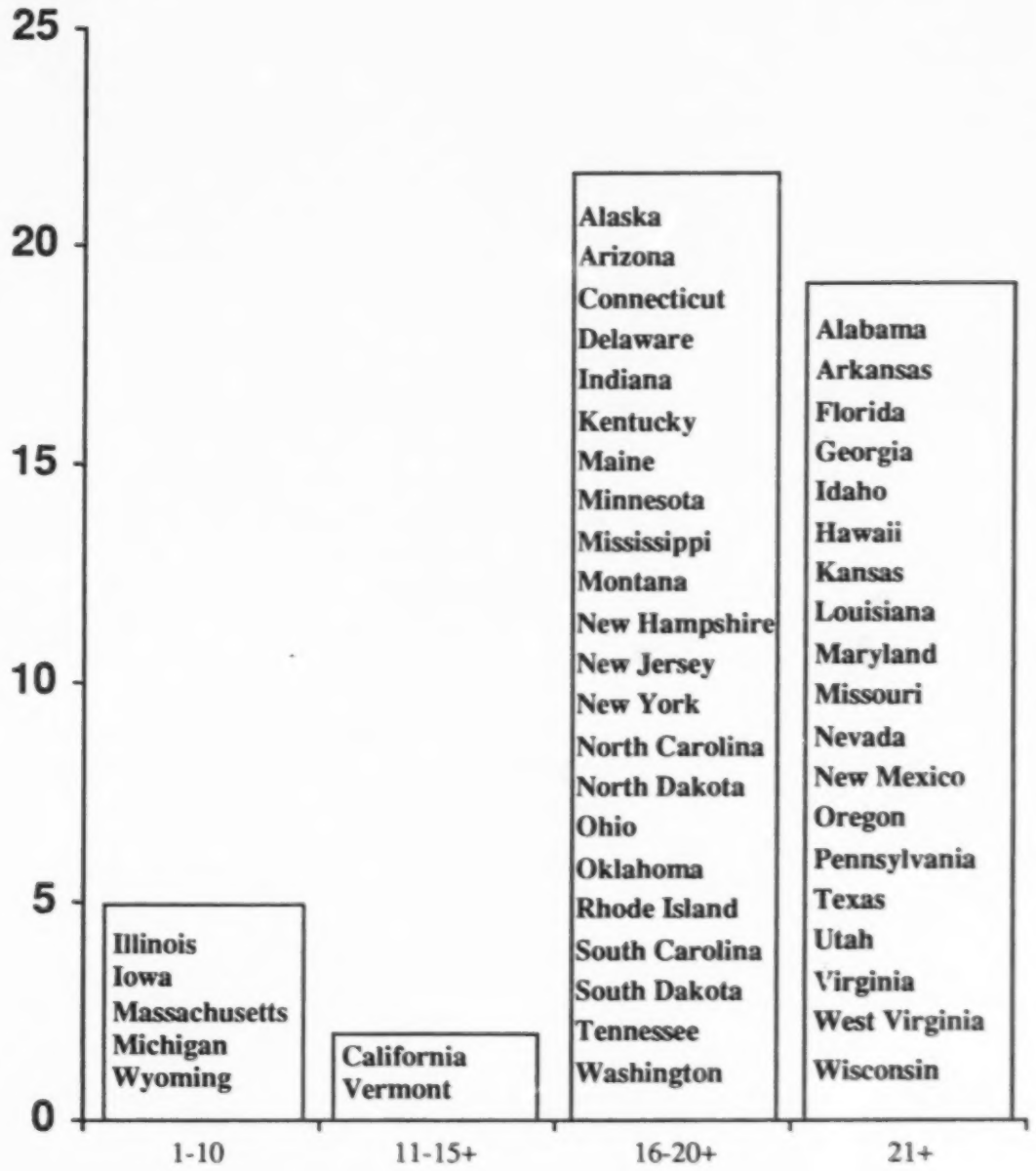
While obtaining information on graduation requirements for students with disabilities may seem like a straightforward task, this was not necessarily the case; the information was not readily accessible. In many instances, our phone inquiry into how graduation requirements are applied to special education students was met with a counter-query: What district are you calling in regards to? This demonstrates that defining graduation rules for students with disabilities at a state level is often not possible. While states may have state level policies or suggested practices, local education agencies may be left the discretion of how to implement these policies.

Forty-four states have established specific Carnegie course unit requirements. Course requirements for graduation vary widely from state to state, ranging from a requirement for 10.25 credits (Illinois) to requirements for 24.00 credits (Florida, Utah), distributed among English, math, social science, science, arts and electives. Most states requiring a specific number of credits require from 16 to 20 credits (see Figure 1). State requirements in many instances are minimum standards that the state has established. Local education agencies (LEAs) in several states have the option of establishing more stringent requirements. Increased requirements may include passage of a high school exit exam or competency test, in addition to more academic credit requirements. Six states (Colorado, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, Wyoming) leave the final determination of graduation credit requirements (through addition or distribution decisions) to LEAs. In one of these states (Colorado) the LEAs are solely responsible for determining requirements for graduation. In Nebraska, 200 credit hours are required by the state, but the distribution of credits is left to the discretion of the LEAs, as long as 80% of the credits are in the core curriculum subjects of English, math, science, and social science. The remaining four states (Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Wyoming) have state requirements for a portion of credits (from 1 to 2.5), and the LEAs add to these requirements. Table 1 shows the specific state credit requirements.

When we asked states whether students were required to pass an exit exam in order to earn a diploma, the answer was negative in all but a handful of states. However, several states that said successful exit test performance was not required actually do require students to pass a minimum competency test (MCT) in order to earn a diploma, making these tests, in effect, high school exit exams. We use the terms interchangeably. Currently, 17 states have some form of exit exam in place on a statewide basis (see Figure 2). Arizona and Indiana have graduation tests pending for 1996 and 1995, respectively. Local education agencies may establish MCT requirements in those states giving them the discretion to establish more stringent graduation requirements than those mandated by state law.

Many states hold students with disabilities to the same standards as other students, including course credits and passage of an exit exam, in order to receive a standard diploma. Others award a regular diploma upon completion of a student's IEP program. Still others award a modified diploma or a certificate of completion upon successful completion of IEP goals and objectives. Several states reserve a certificate of attendance option for those students with severe or profound disabilities. Many of these options are practices that the state has suggested to LEAs. Since local education agencies have been given so much discretion in establishing requirements and practices, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly which policies may actually be used. Table 2 shows the types of exit documents in use by the states.

Figure 1
Carnegie Course Units Required for Graduation



Note: Colorado has no state requirements, leaving requirements to LEA decisions; Nebraska requires 200 credit hours

Table 1

High School Graduation Requirements (Carnegie Course Units) in Curricular Areas

State	English	Math	Social Science	Science	Art/ Music	Foreign Language	Vocational	Other	Elective	Total
Alabama	4	2	3	2	-	-	-	1.5	9.5	22
Alaska	4	2	3	2	-	-	-	1	9	21
Arizona	4	2	2.5	2	.5	-	.5	.5	8	20
Arkansas	4.5	3	3	3	.5	-	-	1	6.5	21.5
California	3	2	3	2	1	-	-	2	-	13
Colorado	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*
Connecticut	4	3	3	2	1	-	-	1	6	20
Delaware	4	2	3	2	-	-	-	2	6	19
Florida	4	3	3	3	1	-	-	1	9	24
Georgia	4	3	3	3	3	-	-	1	4	21
Hawaii	4	3	4	3	-	-	-	2	6	22
Idaho	4	2	2.5	2	-	-	-	4.5	6	21
Illinois	3	2	2	1	1	-	-	1.25	-	10.25
Indiana	4	2	2	2	-	-	-	1	8	19
Iowa	-	-	1.5	-	-	-	-	1	-	*
Kansas	4	2	3	2	-	-	-	1	9	21
Kentucky	4	3	2	2	-	-	-	1	8	20
Louisiana	4	3	3	3	-	-	-	2	8	23
Maine	4	2	2	2	1	-	-	1.5	3.5	16
Maryland	4	3	3	3	1	2	1	1	3	21
Massachusetts	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	*
Michigan	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	*
Minnesota	4	1	3	1	-	-	-	1.66	9.34	20
Mississippi	4	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	8	18
Missouri	3	2	2	2	2	-	-	1	10	22
Montana	4	2	2	2	1	-	1	1	7	20
Nebraska	**	**	**	**	-	-	-	-	-	**
Nevada	4	2	2	2	1	-	-	3	8.5	22.5
New Hampshire	4	2	2	2	.5	-	-	2.25	7	19.75
New Jersey	4	3	3	2	1	-	-	4.5	-	17.5
New Mexico	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	2	9	23
New York	4	2	4	2	1	-	-	2.5	3	18.5
North Carolina	4	3	3	3	-	-	-	1	6	20
North Dakota	4	2	3	2	-	-	-	1	5	17
Ohio	3	2	2	1	-	-	-	1	9	18
Oklahoma	4	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	8	20
Oregon	3	2	3.5	2	1	-	-	2.5	8	22
Pennsylvania	4	3	3	3	2	-	-	1	5	21
Rhode Island	4	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	6	16
South Carolina	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	1	7	20
South Dakota	4	2	3	2	.5	-	-	.5	8	20
Tennessee	4	3	3	3	-	-	4	-	2	20
Texas	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	2	7	21
Utah	3	2	3	2	1.5	-	-	3	9.5	24
Vermont	4	3	3	2	1	-	-	1.5	-	14.5
Virginia	4	2	3	2	1	-	-	2	6	21
Washington	3	2	2.5	2	1	-	-	3	5.5	19
West Virginia	4	2	3	2	1	-	-	2	7	21
Wisconsin	4	2	3	2	-	-	-	2	8.5	21.5
Wyoming	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	*

* Final determination of graduation credit requirements made by LEA.
** 200 credit hours; 80% must be in core subjects of English, math, science, and social science

Figure 2
States Requiring Exit Exams or Minimum Competency Tests

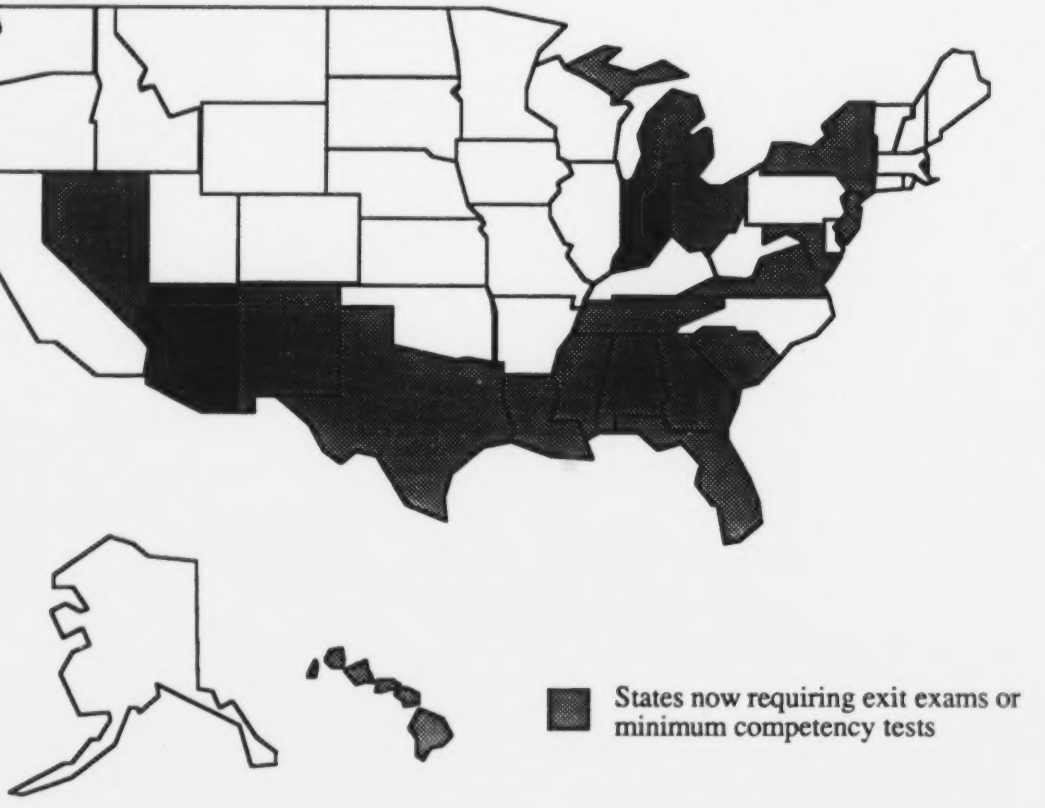

States now requiring exit exams or minimum competency tests
States with pending exit exams or minimum competency tests

Table 2

Exit Document Options for Students with Disabilities

Exit Document	# States Using Option	States
Standard Diploma	19	Arizona, California, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming
Standard Diploma or Certificate	17	Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, Utah
Standard or Modified Diploma	10	Connecticut, Florida, Iowa, Illinois, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, Oregon, West Virginia
Standard or Modified Diploma or Certificate	4	Georgia, Massachusetts, Tennessee, Virginia
Modified Diploma or Certificate	0	
Modified Diploma Only	0	
Certificate Only	0	

All states have standard diplomas as an option for students with disabilities; what differs are the requirements that must be met in order to obtain the standard diploma. Table 3 shows the various requirements that must be met for students with disabilities to earn a standard diploma. The largest number of states requires either a specific number of credits or passing an exit exam in addition to earning a specific number of credits. Some of the states (New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Texas) requiring both credits and passing scores on an exit exam allow for the waiver of some credits and/or of parts of the proficiency exam for individual learners. In these instances, the IEP team determines what is appropriate for the learner, and documentation of this becomes part of the IEP. In nine states, completion of the IEP is the only requirement for obtaining a standard diploma. However, "completion" may still mean different things in different states (see Appendix), with the common alternatives being either completion of the IEP program or meeting IEP goals. States in the "undefined" criterion are those in which the local education agencies determine their own requirements.

Table 3

Standard Diploma Requirements for Students with Disabilities

Requirements	# of States Using Option	States
Credits Only	19	Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin
Completion of IEP	9	Arkansas, California, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont
Credits + MCT/Exit Exam	17	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia
Undefined	5	Colorado, Iowa, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Wyoming

Table 4

Modified Diploma Requirements for Students with Disabilities

Requirements	# of States Using Option	States
Coursework/MCT/ No Exit Exam	1	New York
IEP Team Determination	1	Massachusetts
Complete IEP + Attendance, but do not meet proficiency or competency test standards	1	Tennessee
Complete IEP but not all reqs for diploma or on IEP and do not meet assessment reqs.	1	Georgia
Completion of IEP	2	Virginia, West Virginia
LEA Policy	6	Connecticut, Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon
Undefined	2	Florida, Montana

Requirements for modified diplomas are shown in Table 4. Not only are modified diplomas used much less frequently, but the nature of requirements is spread out much more. The most frequent requirement is "LEA policy," which actually translates to different requirements. Table 5 shows the requirements for certificates. They are quite diverse. While completion of the IEP is most frequent (but still may be called a certificate of performance or certificate of achievement), what it actually entails may differ as well.

Discussion

When we examined graduation requirements for students with disabilities, we found information similar to that of Bodner et al. (1987). While Bodner et al. found 46 states required a specific number of credits for graduation, we found 44 states with specific requirements for credits in English, math, social science, and science. Most emphasized are English credits, with 84% (37 states) requiring 4 credits, and 16% (7 states) requiring 3 credits. For math, 30% (13) require 3 credits, 68% (30) 2 credits, and 2% (1) 1 credit. For social science, 5% (2) require 4 credits, 61% (27) 3 credits, and 34% (15) 2 credits. For science, 18% (8) require 3 credits, 75% (33) 2 credits, and 7% (3) 1 credit. The requirements reported in this study indicate an upward trend in the credits required for graduation since the publication of Bodner et al. in 1987.

Table 5

Certificate Requirements for Students with Disabilities

Requirements	# States Using Option	States
Completion of IEP or Credits, No Exam or Exam, Insufficient Credits	2	Alabama, Hawaii
Completion of IEP	5	Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Virginia
LEA Policy	4	Arkansas, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Dakota
Regular Attendance	1	Colorado
Credits + Attendance, No Exam	5	Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee
Age Out	3	Indiana, Massachusetts, Utah
Completion of IEP or Age Out	1	Alaska

In A Nation at Risk (1983) the National Commission on Excellence in Education made the following curriculum recommendations for graduation requirements: 4 English, 3 math, 3 science, 3 social science, and .5 computer science. At this time, only eight states (Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee) follow these recommendations (excluding the computer science requirement).

Bodner et al. (1987) reported 14 states with a state policy for one exit document, the standard diploma, for all students meeting regular or alternate requirements. In our study, we found 19 states with such a policy, an increase of 10%.

Bodner et al. (1987) also found that 17 states had policies requiring a different exit document from a standard diploma for special education students who did not meet regular graduation requirements, and 19 states left this determination to the LEA. We found that 31 states have either state or local policies for alternative exit documents, which represents a 10% decrease in the number of states using such options. Just as Bodner et al. found, we found all states that have differentiated exit document options also allow a special education student to earn a standard diploma by meeting regular graduation requirements.

In 1987, Bodner et al. reported that 21 states required a competency test for high school graduation. Fifteen of those states used the test score to determine the type of exit document to be awarded. In contrast, we found 17 states requiring a competency test for graduation, and two

additional states with testing programs pending (see Figure 2). It is not possible to compare the changes by states between the two studies, since Bodner et al. provided only aggregated data.

For many states that award standard diplomas or certificates for students with disabilities, the certificate option is reserved for students with severe or profound disabilities (personal communication with several states). This type of policy is confirmed through state reports of students with disabilities who exit the educational system, where the percentage of students graduating through certification in these states averages 20% of the number exiting with a diploma (U.S. Department of Education, 1994) This figure is inflated by states awarding certificates to students with disabilities not passing an exit exam. In New Hampshire, students with disabilities may receive a certificate, but this does not terminate the students' eligibility for special education assistance until age 21.

The information we gathered represents a snapshot of graduation requirements and competency tests. Like many issues in education, the information is in a state of flux as states continue their education reform efforts. For example, the state of Minnesota currently recommends that students with special needs be granted a standard diploma upon completion of their IEP; however, the state is currently looking at implementing an exit exam, and thinking about exempting these students from the testing. Without a passing grade on the competency test, these students will be eligible only for a certificate of completion.

The variety of practices that states have developed regarding graduation and students with disabilities demonstrates that there is not one model that satisfies everyone. There are strong arguments on each side of the issue of standard versus differentiated diplomas for students with disabilities. Those in favor of granting standard diplomas believe that differentiated diplomas perpetuate stigmatization, while those in favor of differentiated diplomas believe that a standard diploma stands for a certain achievement level, and granting this to students who achieve at a different level corrupts the educational process (DeStefano & Metzer, 1991). One proponent of standard diplomas that we talked to stated that "regular education students get undifferentiated diplomas (e.g., merit), why should special education students get differentiated diplomas?" (personal communication with Frank DiMauro, Connecticut). Little is known about the impact that differentiated diplomas have on student motivation or potential for employment, and further research is needed (DeStefano & Metzer, 1991).

There are those who believe that a high school diploma is a reflection of time spent in class, and not reflective of a particular level of achievement. West Virginia has addressed this issue by graduating students with a "warranty," based on their performance on the California Test of Basic Skills in eleventh grade. Each county determines the criterion performance necessary to receive the warranty, which certifies a certain level of proficiency. If an employer determines that the student is not performing at that level of proficiency during the five years following graduation, the student may go back to school at no cost to the sending group.

In Heading Toward Commencement (1992), the U.S. Department of Education discussed the issues surrounding school dropouts, and offered the following suggestions to raise graduation rates for disadvantaged, at-risk, and LEP students:

- individualized instruction
- specialized coursework
- alternative school schedules
- school choice plans

- avoidance of assignments that stigmatize low achievers
- close ties with parents
- steps to deal with students' out-of-school problems

While the Department does not offer these suggestions for students with disabilities, these practices certainly are applicable to all students.

DeStefano and Metzer (1991) remind us that the goals of regular and special education are the same -- to prepare students for independence and self-sufficiency, and that a continuum of outcomes should be accepted. They called for, and we echo, a need for guidelines that help assure fair treatment under the law, and that promote consistency across teachers, schools, and districts; and further research and evaluation to determine the impact of varying practices and policies on students and programs.

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APPENDIX

State High School Graduation Requirements

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
Alabama	English	4	Alabama High School Graduation Exam - Language - Math - Reading administered twice in grades 11 & 12 to give add'l opps. to pass for those failing it in 11th grade	To receive diploma, must have Carnegie Units plus pass exam - If have credits, but don't pass exam→certificate - if pass exam, but don't have credit→certificate - If complete IEP→ certificate
	Math	2		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Science	2		
	Health	.5		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	9.5		
	Total	22		
Alaska	Lang. Arts	4	None	- Can substitute coursework in content area; notation on transcript - If severe→certificate of attendance or completion, based on completion of IEP or attending school to age 22
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Health/Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	9		
	Total	21		
Arizona	English or ESL	4	Arizona Student Assessment Program - Reading - Writing - Math - Soc. Studies (begins with 9th grade class of 1996	Meet course credits and/or IEP goals→standard diploma; LEA may use attendance certificate for those aging out; Spec. Ed. students eligible to receive diploma w/o meeting state competency reqs., but reference to Spec. Ed. placement may be placed on transcript or permanent file
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Social Studies	1.5		
	History/Geog.	1		
	Free Enter.	.5		
	Arts/Voc. Ed.	1		
	Electives (LEA)	8		
	Total	20		
Arkansas (effective 96/97)	English	4	None	Grad requirements in IEP - Diploma or certificate depends on LEA, although state strongly recommends diploma
	Oral Commun.	.5		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	or			
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Votech	1		
	Math	3		
	Science	3		
	Phys. Ed.	.5		
	Health	.5		
	Fine Arts	.5		
	Electives	6.5		
	Total	21.5		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
California	English	3	Proficiency test by LEA (districts choose tests and set standards) - Reading - Writing - Computation	Completion of IEP program of study and differential proficiency standards→standard diploma
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Arts/Lang.	1		
	Phys. Ed.	2		
	Total	13		
Colorado	Local Education Agency determines		May be required by LEA; if so, may be waived for students with disabilities; reasonable accommodations should be made	All students meeting grad reqs of LEA→standard diploma - If complete IEP pgm, but not LEA grad reqs, IEP diploma certifies completion of that course of study - All students who attend regularly, but don't meet reqs for standard diploma or IEP diploma→cert. of attendance or completion
Connecticut	English	4	None	Same reqs unless IEP team determines to be inappropriate; no standard exit document; state encourages use of standard diploma, but modified diplomas are an LEA option
	Math	3		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Science	2		
	Arts or Voc. Ed.	1		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	6		
	Total	20		
Delaware	English	4	None	Same reqs, but content may be modified→standard diploma - Certificate of performance for those with severe impairments
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Driver's Ed.	.5		
	Health	.5		
	Electives	6		
	Total	19		
Florida	English	4	High School Competency Test - Reading - Writing - Math	Same requirements, but courses and programs can be modified; students must have access to standard diploma; also may be eligible for special diploma
	Math	3		
	Science	3		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Arts or Voc. Ed.	1		
	Life Mgmt.	.5		
	Phys. Ed.	.5		
	Electives	9		
	Total	24		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
Georgia	English	4	Georgia High School Graduation Test - English/Lang. Arts - Health - Math - Science - Soc. Studies - Writing	Standard diploma if satisfy attendance reqs, Carnegie Units & state test reqs; HS performance certificate if meet attendance & Carnegie Units, but not test criteria; Special Ed. diploma if on IEP and do not meet assessment reqs or complete IEP, but don't have all reqs for diploma
	Math	3		
	Science	3		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Health/Phy. Ed.	1		
	Computer/Arts Votech/Lang.	3		
	Electives	4		
	Total	21		
Hawaii	English	4	Hawaii State Test of Essential Competencies (HSTEC) 16 competencies; accommodations/modifications made; students may retake until they pass - State has just adopted new competency standards and is working on alternate competencies	Certificate of course completion to both regular and Special Ed. students when have all coursework, but don't pass HSTEC or certificate of completion to students with disabilities who complete all requirements of IEP; decision regarding diploma or certificate focus made around 9th grade
	Soc. Studies	4		
	Math	3		
	Science	3		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Guidance	.5		
	Health	.5		
	Electives	6		
	Total	22		
Idaho	English	4	No exit exam; seniors must meet C average in core classes (English, Math, reading, Speech) or receive criterion score on test of academic proficiency and on writing test	All individuals receive same diploma, but transcript will indicate course of study (e.g. Carnegie Units or IEP program)
	Math	2		
	Reading	.5		
	Speech	.5		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Econ.	.5		
	Health	.5		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Humanities	2		
	Electives	6		
	Total	21		
Illinois	Lang. Arts	3	LEA may require; no statewide requirement	IEP determines what requirements apply to Spec. Ed. student - If huge accomodations in IEP→standard diploma by meeting different standards - LEA can determine if different diploma from regular, but policy must be published
	Math	2		
	Science	1		
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Arts/For. Lang./ Votech 1			
	Health	.5		
	Phys. Ed.	.5		
	Consumer Ed.	.25		
	Total	10.25		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
Indiana	Lang. Arts	4	Pending for Fall 1995	Two routes: 1) Traditional diploma 2) Certification of completion through age 22 - Case conference decision which will apply--modify curriculum or coursework
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Health	.5		
	Phys. Ed.	.5		
	Electives	8		
	Total	19		
Iowa	Soc. Studies	1.5	None	Each LEA determines policy; standard diploma in most cases, some (severe) may get modified diploma
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Remainder determined by LEA			
Kansas	Lang. Arts	4	None	Standard diploma upon completion of state reqs; LEA may have alternative grad. reqs policy for Special Ed., requires approval of state board
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Science	2		
	Math	2		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	9		
	Total	21		
Kentucky	Lang. Arts	4	None	All earn standard diploma if have cognitive ability to complete credits - If not cognitively able, IEP team can decide on a certificate of program completion
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Math	3		
	Science	2		
	Health	.5		
	Phys. Ed.	.5		
	Electives	8		
	Total	20		
Louisiana	English	4	Graduation Test - English, Lang. Arts, Writing and Math--1st admin. in gr. 10 - Science and Soc. Studies--1st admin. in gr. 11 - Retake if no passing mark	Same reqs & exam--course content or delivery may be modified by IEP→standard diploma - If IEP determines reqs inappropriate→certificate of achievement
	Math	3		
	Science	3		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Health/Phy. Ed.	2		
	Electives	8		
	Total	23		
Maine	English	4	None	IEP team may make reasonable and appropriate accommodations to state & local grad reqs, completion of IEP grad reqs→standard diploma unless LEA has specific competency-based grad reqs applicable to all students; standard or modified diploma LEA option; age out also an option
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Amer. History	1		
	Arts	1		
	Soc. Studies	1		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Health	.5		
	Electives	3.5		
	Total	16		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
Maryland	English	4	(Begins with 93/94 7th grade)	Must meet all requirements for standard diploma; if on IEP and meet attendance reqs, but can't meet functional test→certificate if meet standards of: either 4 years beyond grade 8 & skills defined or 4 years beyond grade 8 & age 21
	Math	3	- MD Functional Reading	
	Science	3	- MD Functional Math	
	Soc. Studies	3	- MD Functional Writing	
	Fine Arts	1	- MD Test of Citizenship Skills	
	Health/Phy. Ed.	1	Plus participation in Arts/Phys. Ed., World of Work, Survival Skills	
	Tech. Ed.	1		
	Foreign Lang.	2		
	Or Adv.Tech.Ed.	2		
	Electives	3		
	Total	21		
Massachusetts	Amer. History	1	None	IEP team determines if standard of modified diploma (if program altered extensively) or certificate of completion if student reaches age 22
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Remainder determined by LEA			
Michigan	Civics		Proficiency tests for Math, Science and Communication Arts (Reading and Writing) being developed; will be effective for grad. class of '97 for state endorsed diploma; currently using Michigan Educational Assessment of Progress--given in 10th grade with 3 opps to retake if no pass	Still working out details of effects of new core curriculum; broad guidelines being developed for accommodations; Sp. Ed. students earn standard diploma if complete program; receive state endorsed diploma if also pass proficiency tests
	Remainder determined by LEA (Note--there is a new legislation phasing in core curriculum 6/94)			
Minnesota	Communic.	4	None	Standard diploma if IEP goals met (may change under new grad rule)
	Soc. Studies	3		- Student receives course credit if can demonstrate learner outcomes met
	Math	1		
	Science	1		
	Phys. Ed.	1.16		
	Health	.5		
	Electives	9.34		
	Total	20		
Mississippi (reqs are increasing over next five years)	English	4	Functional Literacy Exam	Same standards (with support services) for standard diploma; if standards not met→ certificate of attendance for successful completion of IEP
	Math	2	- Reading	
	Science	2	- Math	
	Soc. Studies	2	- Written comm. given 11th grad with opps. to retest if no pass	
	Electives	8		
	Total	18		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
Missouri	English	3	None	Either no exclusions or exceptions on the normal grad reqs or reqs can be dictated by IEP; if student has Carnegie Units, ideally will receive standard diploma; some LEA grant certificate of attendance or IEP completion (severe/profound), but are strongly encouraged by state education dept. not to do it
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Fine Arts	1		
	Practical Arts	1		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	10		
	Total	22		
Montana	English	4	None	Grad reqs may be waived or courses modified for Spec. Ed. students; Carnegie Units still required for standard diploma; diploma may say "individually designed program of study"; all students earn diploma
	Math	2		
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Science	2		
	Health	1		
	Fine Arts	1		
	Voc./Prac. Arts	1		
	Electives	7		
	Total	20		
Nebraska	200 credit hours; LEA determines; 80% from core curriculum (English, Math, Science, Soc. Studies)		None	Reqs are determined by LEA; type of diploma (standard or modified) determined by LEA
Nevada	English	4	Nevada High School Proficiency Exam Program (NPEP) - Math - Reading - Writing Given in 11th grade with multiple opps. to pass	Standard diploma unless IEP calls for a different standard, then IEP controls. Adjusted diploma is an LEA prerogative. NPEP allows accommodations for proficiency testing; must pass exams for standard diploma.
	Math	2		
	Phys. Ed.	2		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Arts/Humanities	1		
	Health	.5		
	Computer	.5		
	Electives	8.5		
	Total	22.5		
New Hampshire	English	4	None	For standard diploma, need credits (accommodations made for disability); can receive a certificate, but this does not terminate eligibility for SPED; particular reqs can be waived by Commi sioner of Education if requested by local school board and determined to be in best interest of student
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	2		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Business/Econ.	.5		
	Health	.25		
	Arts	.5		
	Computer	.5		
	Electives	7		
	Total	19.75		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
New Jersey	English	4	High School Proficiency Test - Math - Reading - Writing	IEP can exempt grad reqs; shall specify which reqs would qualify the student for standard diploma - May be exempted from proficiency test
	Math	3		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Science	2		
	Phys. Ed.	4		
	Arts	1		
	Career	.5		
	Total	17.5		
New Mexico	English	4	New Mexico High School Competency Exam - Reading - Language Arts - Math - Science - Soc. Science	Sp. Ed. may participate or be exempted from exam, or modifications made in administration. STDT may receive standard diploma on completion of IEP objectives if approved by LEA & state superintendent; certificate of completion an LEA option, but state does not recommend
	Math	3		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Science	3		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Communic.	1		
	Electives	9		
	Total	23		
New York	English	4	Regents Competency Tests or Regents Examinations - Reading and Writing - Math - Science - Global Studies - U.S. History and Govt. Modified testing procedures used for Sp. Ed. students	All students must have access to curricular content and testing; coursework + exams→Regents diploma; coursework, no exams→ local diploma; completion of IEP→IEP diploma (usually for severe cases)
	Soc. Studies	4		
	Science	2		
	Math	2		
	Art/Music	1		
	Health	.5		
	Phys. Ed.	2		
	Electives	3		
	Total	18.5		
North Carolina	English	4	Eliminated 6/94; will be replacing with other standards for freshmen in '95	Same standards for standard diploma, modified if necessary - Certificate of graduation if have coursework, but no pass on test (same for regular and special ed.)
	Math	3		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Science	3		
	Health/Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	6		
	Total	20		
North Dakota	English	4	None	Same reqs for standard diploma unless IEP changes/modifies, transcripts note grades modified and instruction through IEP; for moderate/severe, IEP process for functional curriculum, transcript will note functional coursework; certificate of completion an LEA option
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	5		
	Total	17		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
Ohio	English	3	Ninth Grade Proficiency Tests - Reading - Writing - Math - Citizenship (begins 7/94, phased in over 4 years)	IEP may excuse student from taking any particular test or define modification for administration; completion of courses or IEP program and proficiency tests or exemptions→diploma
	Soc. Science	2		
	Math	2		
	Science	1		
	Health/Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	9		
	Total	18		
Oklahoma	Lang. Arts	4	None	Must meet credit reqs, credit determined by completion of course reqs through IEP goals and objectives; satisfactory completion→standard diploma
	Science	2		
	Math	2		
	Soc. Studies	2		
	The Arts	2		
	Electives	8		
	Total	20		
Oregon	Lang. Arts	3	None	Modified diplomas are a district option; decision made by LEA whether students receive standard or modified diploma; acceptable adaptations and modification will be spelled out in education reform act
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	2.5		
	Health/Phy. Ed.	2		
	Career Dev.	.5		
	Econ.	1		
	Arts/Lang.	1		
	Electives	8		
	Total	22		
Pennsylvania	English	4	None	Students on IEP can meet outcome expectations by completion of IEP→ standard diploma
	Math	3		
	Science	3		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Arts/Human.	2		
	Health/Phys. Ed.	1		
	Electives	5		
	Total	21		
Rhode Island (minimum for non-college bound)	English	4	None	Standard diploma upon completion of IEP program
	Soc. Science	2		
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Electives	6		
	Total	16		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
South Carolina	Math	3	Exit exam for Reading, Math, Writing given in 10th grade; remedial programs given to those not passing; required for diploma (as of 89/90, 4 opptys to take test. If no pass, receive certificate with credits earned and grades completed)	Special Ed. students included in testing unless IEP states inappropriate; testing modifications spelled out in administrative guidelines; must earn credits + pass exam→standard diploma; otherwise→Special Ed. certificate; coursework for credits may be modified by IEP
	Science	2		
	Lang. Arts	4		
	History	1		
	Econ./Govt.	1		
	Soc. Studies	1		
	Phys. Ed./ROTC	1		
	Electives	7		
	Total	20		
South Dakota	English	4	None	On completion of IEP and 20 units→standard diploma
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Computer	.5		
	Fine Arts	.5		
	Electives	8		
	Total	20		
Tennessee (effective with 94/95 9th grade)	English	4	Proficiency or competency test - Reading - Language - Math - Science - Soc. Studies	Standard diploma if 20 credits + pass all subtests + satisfactory attendance and conduct; certificate if 20 credits + satisfactory attendance and conduct, but don't meet proficiency or competency test standards; Special Ed. diploma if complete IEP + satisfactory attendance and conduct, but don't meet proficiency or competency test standards
	Math	3		
	Science	3		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Wellness	1		
	Plus either			
	Foreign Lang.	2		
	Fine Arts	1		
	Electives	3		
	OR			
	Tech Credits	4		
	Electives	2		
	Total	20		
Texas	English	4	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills given in 10th grade - Writing - Reading - Math	May be exempted from all or part of exams; only one diploma, three seals - Regular - Advanced - Honors Alternatives for those not taking exams: aging out, meeting reqs for junior college, employability
	Math	3		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	2.5		
	Econ.	.5		
	Phy. Ed./Health	2		
	Electives	7		
	Total	21		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
Utah	Lang. Arts	3	None	Standard diploma if grad reqs or IEP reqs are completed; if not complete by age 22, certificate of completion or progress
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Arts	1.5		
	Health	2		
	App. Techno.	1		
	Electives	9.5		
	Total	24		
Vermont	English	4	None	Multi-year plan for students with limiting disabilities allows exceptions and alternative requirements→diploma when completed
	Math/Science	5		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Arts	1		
	Phys. Ed.	1.5		
	Total	14.5		
Virginia	English	4	Literacy Passport Test for ninth graders	Must meet same reqs for standard diploma; completion of IEP→special diploma; if do not qualify for diploma→certificate for completion of a prescribed course of study
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Math/Science	1		
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Health/Phy. Ed.	2		
	Arts	1		
	Electives	6		
	Total	21		
Washington	English	3	None	No student denied opportunity to earn diploma because of limitations of ability--allows accommodations or requirement exemptions
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Soc. Studies	2.5		
	Career	1		
	Phys. Ed.	2		
	Fine Arts or Above Area	1		
	Electives	5.5		
	Total	19		
West Virginia	English	4	None	Modifications to delivery of learning objectives may be made by IEP team; if IEP objectives completed→standard diploma; alternative learning objectives established for students unable to meet standard diploma reqs→ modified diploma for completion of IEP
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Phys. Ed.	1		
	Health	1		
	Arts/For. Lang.	1		
	Electives	7		
	Total	21		

State	Courses		Graduation Test	Students with Disabilities
Wisconsin	English	4	None	Education programs to accommodate exceptional interests, needs, or requirements→successful completion may result in issuance of diploma; LEA has option of standard or modified diploma or certificate; certificate typically used only for severe/profound
	Soc. Studies	3		
	Math	2		
	Science	2		
	Phys. Ed.	1.5		
	Health	.5		
	Electives (recommended) 8.5			
	Total	21.5		
Wyoming	Constitution	1	None	Must meet same reqs for LEA performance standards
	WY History	1		
	Remainder determined by LEA			